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By the same Author

UNINSPIRED VERSE (1917)

SUNSHINE

The Tuning of a Soul and
a Sequence of Joyous Verse
(1918. Third Edition 1920)

THE HIDDEN SPLENDOUR

of Love, Nature and Beauty
(Illustrated Edition 1920)

IN AND
OUT OF
HEAVEN



Hibbard Gilson

IN AND OUT OF HEAVEN

A SEQUENCE OF
WIND - BLOWN
MELODIES

— BY

HIBBART GILSON

WITH PORTRAIT



"As thy day so shall thy strength be"
—Old Testament

LONDON
HENRY J. DRANE

Maker of Beautiful Books

82A FARRINGTON STREET E.C. 4

DRANE'S
FARRINGTON STREET, E.C.

PR
6013
G428c

To my
WATERMAN PEN
a Tried and Trusty Friend

1026200

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PREFATORY

NOTE

If a writer should be consistent, logical, rational, astute and wise in every thought to which he gives expression, then I must be a very indifferent scribe indeed. In the following pages there are many contradictory utterances and mistaken sentiments. Why not? The artist must not imagine things as he would have them, but rather as they would most likely seem.

In these interdependent versicles, I have endeavoured to depict the shifting moods of no heroic personality. The character they reveal is that of a somewhat weak and blundering man. A man, however, who, despite the disadvantages of a naturally rebellious temperament, ever strove to obtain the highest, notwithstanding that he frequently fell into the abyss below. Finally he found, though bereft of all he held most dear on Earth, the peace and true happiness that are latent within the souls of all men—the divine inheritance, no matter how hard the way, of all diligent seekers after truth and stainless grace.

HIBBART GILSON.

Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin.

**BOOK
ONE**

*He who has sown by love joy in his soul
Has not spent fruitlessly life's brightest days;
For either he has tried to tread God's ways,
Or sought his own peace in the lifted bowl.*

—OMAR KHAYYAM.

I

MEANDERING up the hill,
I meet the evening breeze,
And I survey
The beauty of the way.
There is the shelter of the trees
Beyond the sloping lea
Bedecked all over
With buttercups and clover ;
The oblivion of solitude
Where flowers are company ;
The glitter of the stream
That holds the last sunbeam
Of day ; and here beside the wood,
Where linnets build a nest,
I tip-toe as I move along
Listening to a multitude in song,
The skylark, blackbird, thrush, and robin
red-breast.

But now
Twilight deepens. The stars that rise
Are magnets to my dream-filled eyes ;
So, drowsily I murmur, in this hour
Of star-lit beauty, joy and bliss :
“ I want no fuller life than this.”

II

THE night ! Know you the night ?—
(I know it well)—
The Moon half hid from sight ;
The tender spell
Thrown o'er two lovers ; haze
Hiding the vale ;
The night bird's song of praise ;
The sudden wail
Of some trapped animal ?
Well, and if you do,
See you the mystical
Enchantment, too ?

You cannot ? Then you miss
The best ! . . . The hour
That holds nocturnal bliss,
And brings me power
O'er thought that penetrates
Into the heart
Of things, that opens gates
To joy apart
From all foreboding, gives
Untold delight ;
While tranquil beauty lives
In dreams at night.

III

WHEN stars have spun the glory of the night,
And whirling worlds are captured in the
streams,

The lures of Nature troubled hours requite.

The bright-set splendours of the Sky invite
My weary Soul to freshen in their gleams,
When stars have spun the glory of the night.

How sweet the rapture of the Soul in flight !
She murmurs, lost in multitude of dreams,
“ The lures of Nature troubled hours requite ! ”

The atmosphere absorbs my mind, and slight
Becomes my hold on human things and
schemes,

When stars have spun the glory of the night.

Then, for a while, I'm one with all in sight ;
And, from these moments, know how true
it seems

That lures of Nature troubled hours requite.

Then ere I meet myself again, how bright
Becomes my Soul, inspired with wondrous
themes :

When stars have spun the glory of the night,
The lures of Nature troubled hours requite.

IV

BRING me visions, Night !
Let the evening primrose soothe me ;
Magic of encircling odours
Make me drowsy.

Graceful Spirits rise !
Be they fairies ?—am I dreaming ?
Children of an Elfin Kingdom
Play around me.

Yonder flows the stream . . .
Can its melody deceive me,
Or do maidens sing a chorus
Gently near me ?

V

I KNOW a sleepy wood,
 Where I can go and hide, where all
 The turmoil of the World
 Is lost in faerie dream ;
 Where every shadow shapes
 Some graceful nymph,
 And Love is fain
 Of Love.
 Ah ;
 'Tis good . . .
 Is there a lot,
 In any life,
 Sadder than dreamless youth ?
 When aspiration fails
 To move the growing mind,
 And Fancy reigns not o'er the heart,
 Youth is no longer young.

VI

BOYHOOD, still linger!—must you go?
The growing love for fields and lanes;
The song of birds to imitate;
The search for eggs and butterflies;
The shelter of a sweetly scented wood,
Gave careless bliss.

Cross not my path,
Ye older thoughts, since I would roam
Alone, all ignorant of worldly wisdom,
Like some wild flower that knows no art
but Nature.
I would have the World remain a dream,
Believe it good and dear,
And all mankind my lover.

VII

WITHIN my spirit, deep the waters run,
And bubbling emotions are carrying
My heart along, buoyant with promising
Hope, vague since in the mist there is not
one

Clear expectation. As some frail craft spun
Upon the swelling tide, I heedless swing
From side to side, as would the crazy thing
I am, lost in the surge ; or chartless run

Unpiloted, trusting to Providence.
The proud derelict, *Youth*, am I—I cut
My moorings, and now race before the
breeze

In search of any route that's not prepense ;
Although I sight the frowning rocks that jut
Beyond the boyhood's harbourage of ease.

VIII

THEY GO—the innocent delights and themes
Of boyhood, and I now begin to learn
How deep and strange emotion is. I yearn
To meet the maidens of my early dreams,
To feel the warmth, the mad impulse of
Love.

Fancy cannot content man's spirit ; nor
Can I cherish the fairies as of yore,
Such eerie forms bring no delight to me,
Since they are vague without the mystery
Of sex—cold spectres clad in glowing gowns.

To-day I feel I am a man, and know
That I am incomplete ; thus, restless go
To seek my counterpart across the downs,
In rural solitudes and crowded towns.

IX

'Tis strange I should be shy. I romped
with maids

(When I was younger) in the glades.

At fall of night, oft would I go

Where gipsies camped and sang around
the glow

Of burning twigs, or, sitting on a bench,
Enjoy the stories of a dark-haired wench.
But now I'm not contented with such revelry,
And lonely seems each Summer day.

I hear the gypsies' merriment,
Yet feel no more the lure of night ;
Since my spirit is tired and spent—

The desires of youth invite

And yet repel a thousand joys . . .

How I envy that group of careless boys !

Conscious of my need, my nature calls . . .

I am not ashamed to acknowledge the man
in me ;

But scorn the feeble fop who draws

Out idiotic platitudes on the lust

Of youth. Self-accounted saints dub all
they miss,

Or is denied to them, as wrong,

And live on the frugal nutriment of a phrase.

My mind, hot and reckless though it be, I
trust

Is cleaner than my critic's, though I long

For the full red lips I am meant to kiss,

The warm soft body, and the shapely limbs
to praise.

X

PHANTOM Spirit of my dreams,
Although the night has given place to day,
I feel you near my side, and yet Love seems
Resolved to feel a want : it is his way
To find a sweet felicity

In longing. Verily,
I believe, did I not know a star to be,
I still would seek the Sun ;
And though my plans a thousand times were
 left undone,
I still would dream
And scheme.

But never will I sing to vacant skies
All the fair thought that in me lies . . .
Have I not grown,
All alone
With Beauty, to enable me to give
A spirit entire to you,
Wherein do live
A thousand images of all things true ?

Did I not purge my heart in the sanctuary
Of rural quietude, and commune
With the peaceful Spirits of ancient lovers
 on the daisy
Dappled lea,
Or as I stood, some Summer afternoon,
On the ridge of yonder hillock heather-clad,
When it seemed that Nature bade the winds
 be glad ?

Then why are we not face to face,
That we may gaze at ardent eyes and kiss ? . .
Enough of dreams ! A moment full of
 living grace
Is worth a century of fancied bliss.
Therefore, if Spirit to Spirit can call,
I will not play with phantoms at all,
But draw you swiftly to my side
As a dear and dainty bride.

XI

LOVE is calling
Out there
 in the magic gloom,
And the air is heavy
With the hawthorn bloom.

Love is calling
Out there
 in the silent night,
And the clouds hang low
In the wan twilight.

Love is calling
Out there
 in the dim recesses
Of the wood, and glowing
In the wind's caresses.

Love is calling
Out there
 in the lapping stream,
Playing drowsy melodies
To my evening dream.

XII

In the silvery sheen of the high shining Moon ;
(While the western wind was whispering
Saucy secrets to the swain and sorceress,
Murmuring its melody into the tune
Of the simple symphony the villagers were
singing),

Dangerously dainty and dear, in a dress
Of delicate design, there tripped a tidy maid,
Deliciously demure, into the grassy glade.
Roses rested in her roguish countenance,
Curly tresses clung around her ears,
Dallying dimples about her mouth did dance,
And liquid laughter loitered in her eyes—
Light-blue orbs that brightened in their
bliss.

Never a nymph so neat mid all the playful
dears

Who like to love in laughter and simply
speak in sighs,

Who frighten the forward with a frown and
catch their captives with a kiss.

And I heard her father say, as she slyly stole
my heart,

" My daughter, Joy."—and there the baffling
beauty stood,

In all her pride, a bonny bud of womanhood.

XIII

SHE is no stranger, though we have not been
Face to face ere this.

When I listened to the limpid brook,
As it euphonious babbled beneath the willow
tree,

Did not my fancy blend her voice into its
melody?—

Had I e'er a vision or romance that took
Her not as heroine?—

And, without her, were Heaven itself a port
of bliss?—

When I lay me by some graceful flower,
That decked a slender stem,
Was the fragrance my spirit inhaled e'er
So soothing as the delicate perfume in her
hair?—

Seemed not the Sun her regal diadem?—

And was not the eerie hour

Of evening hers?—did not stars assemble
To light her path, and tremble

Lest an April cloud should hide

The angelic phantom at my side?—

Vying one with the other, how oft have
 envious trees

Striven to cast the daintiest shade resemblant
 of her?—

How often has an indolent mist
Lovingly floated on the balmy breeze,
Concealing me from eyes that mock a
 rhapsodist,

When I dreamed my love did stir
The branches in the friendly wood,
Pitying my solitude?—

Was there a thought of mine
She did not share?—

Was there a thing on Earth that men call
 fair,

In which she did not dwell? . . .

And now that we are face to face,

I deem her none the less divine

Than when she was the phantom of a wood-
 land spell ;

But murmur joyously : “ She is no stranger,
 “ since I trace

“ Innumerable intimate secrets in her face.”

XIV

RHYTHMIC body,
Swaying gracefully,
Buoyant thou art
In mind and heart.
More supple thou couldst not be !

Unfathomable thou art,
Yet the shallowest brook
Is dull compared to thee.
The Sun is in thy look
With all its extasy.

The depths of thine eyes
Wondrously rise,
Yet deeper become,
As though they held some
Hidden secret yet
They would not quite forget.

Then as I pass thy bower,
Travelling my solitary road,
Thankful for one hour
Spent in thy abode,
Out of thy charity
Spare a thought for me !

Then the storm may blow,
Since what care I
Now that I know
Beneath the same sky
Once I did find
Shelter in thy mind ?

XV

TWELVE months ago I met you, ladye fair ;
Since then we have not met,
Though Love is in the air.

A lonesome note has creeped into my song :
'Tis twelve months since we met,
Twelve months so drear and long.

The Spring has gone, and Summer breezes
 blow :
The days are lengthening—we met
Twelve maddening months ago.

XVI

WAKE, Belovèd, wake !
Gentle breezes shake,
In the roseate avenue,
Blossoms from stems, and waft
Them o'er meadows thus pathed
For you.

Wake, Belovèd, wake !
Round the flowers that slake
Their thirst in sparkling dew,
Bumble-bees are humming,
And I am coming
To you.

Wake, Belovèd, wake !
Sunshine dances o'er the lake,
While butterflies pursue
Sweet aromas all the day,
And I would stay
With you.

XVII

DID the Sun burn up the grass,
And the rivers run dry ;
Did the birds forget to sing,
And the mighty trees decay ;
Did Beauty hide herself,
And desolation reign ;
So long as you were left to me,
What would it matter, dear ?

Selfish lover that I am !
If you love the grasses green,
And the flowing rivers ;
If you love the song of birds,
And the mighty trees ;
Were their glory to be hid
And desolation reign,
So long as you were sad,
How could I be happy ?

Tremble not, Belovèd :
Beauty shall outlive the day,
And the Souls of men
Know eternal grace ! . . .
The glory of the universe
Shall reign unceasingly,
Since the thought of loveliness
Is more immortal
Than loveliness itself.

XVIII

So long as Love can last,
The Winter wind may blow,
The ground be clad with snow ;
So long as Love can last,
We mind not where we go
Nor count the journey slow ;
So long as Love can last,
The Winter wind may blow.

XIX

HUSHED is the world wherein my ladye sleeps,
And garden-warblers wake no distant deeps ;
But all her world is wrapt in silence, yet
Her Love-borne visions are to music set.

There's melody within her heart unhushed,
A smile upon the mouth my lips have
 touched,
And she's awake where all things are her
 own,
A paradise only to lovers known.

XX

WHERE thou didst first enchant my sight, I
 wait
 For thee, long-sought, recalling how the
 bloom
 Of thy fresh maidenhood—strong, lithe,
 and straight
 As thou art—seemed a vision in the gloom
 Of the unbosoming night. While the perfume
 Of honeysuckle sweet embalmed the air,
 Thou stoodst absorbing all; yet hadst thou
 room,
 Within the portals of thy mind so fair,
 For me?—or didst thou then forget that I
 was there?

Thy full lips' honey rich, I longed to taste;
 Yet feared to break thy faerie spell, to
 turn
 Thee, simple sorceress, by my hot haste,
 Into a woman. Wast thou, maiden, ripe
 to learn
 The passions wont in older breasts to burn?
 If not—ah; well might I endure desire
 That thy fair innocence all should discern.
 But, lo! within thine eyes there is a fire
 That half reflects thy heart and bids me it
 acquire.

XXI

Now phantom shadows steal along the lea,
Dear heart, we'll rest beneath the sylvan
boughs,

Where undisturbed we may converse, or
drowse

And weave a wondrous dream of days to be.

Thus pillowed on thy breast, there come to
me

The melodies of eager thoughts that rouse
The songs that slumber in my heart, and
house

Within my mind a new-born extasy.

Here, in this Love-girt grove, the trees will
share

Our dreams and sow the future woods to
shield

Fond lovers destined yet to meet on Earth.

All Life springs from a dream, all joy and
care

Are visioned first : ere man his spirit yield
To their embrace, he wants or fears their
birth.

XXII

As the night kisses thy brow,
Fondling each tress,
I kiss thee now,
Returning thy caress.

And the brook murmurs low
A playful song,
In the after-glow,
As it babbles along.

There's Love in the air
To-night,
And thou art fair
For my delight.

Then, sing to me,
As thou alone canst do,
Some melody
Borne in thy heart for two.

And the stars will shine
Clearly, lovingly,
Since thou art mine,
And thou hast me.

XXIII

I dreamed that Love was wise
And moved with measured tread ;
But, as I gaze into thine eyes,
All reason now has fled ;
And my Soul, once self-possessed,
Lies a captive on thy breast.

Love is a tyrant, yea ;
But I would not have him away,
And, though his bands be slight,
They could not be broken with all my might,
Since I'm a captive willingly
If thou the captor be.

Then let the four winds proclaim it,
Love's victory ! How came it ?
—None knows ! Let the Heavens ring
With the tale of our wooing !
Wast thou the pursued, I the pursuer ?—
Or was I the wooed, thou the wooer ?
—There is a riddle for the Wind
That neither of us need mind !

XXIV

STIR not, Belovèd ;
Move neither eye nor limb,
Lest the magic be sped
From thee and this woodland dim.

Let thy elegance lie
Undisturbed in my arms,
And Time uncounted fly,
Whilst I drink in thy charms.

Breathe a fervent thought,
As I hold thee to my breast—
Something warmly wrought
And joyously confessed :

Whilst our pulses vibrate
With one rhythmic beat,
Immeasurably passionate
And sensitively sweet.

O woman, warm and lovely,
There is no pulsation half so glad
As the one aroused by thee,
So sensibly mad.

Then stir not, maiden dear ;
Move neither eye nor limb,
But whisper in my ear
Thoughts fit for the twilight dim.

BOOK
TWO

*Oh, sons of earth, attempt ye still to rise,
By mountains pil'd on mountains, to the skies ?
Heav'n still with laughter the vain toil surveys,
And buries madmen in the heaps they raise.*

—ALEXANDER POPE.

XXV

A low cloud in the distant sky ;
A slight uneasy quickening of the wind ;
The rustle of trees as I pass by,
Wending my home-ward way to blend
Maturer dreams with hints of ripening Love.

Is there an omen in the sudden stir?—
Will the low-luminous cloud soon tower
above,
Darkling and angry?—Do these signs infer
A dreaded change to come?

O trembling fool,
Must thou think ill when all the World is
well?—
Must thou be fevered when the hour is cool?
Then go—and, like a simpleton, foretell,
Forecast, without a cause, a mournful
morrow.
Pale coward that thou art! poor infidel!
Destroy thy peace by fearing pain shall
follow;
Or, learn the truth,—come joy or misery,
The heart that doubts not knows felicity.

XXVI

CROSSING meadows,
Home-ward bound,
I fear new woes
Shall be found.

Dreamed I of things
Not to be,
That my heart sings
Mournfully? . . .

Foolish lover,
Hours too glad,
Once they're over,
Leave one sad.

*Some men are tired
By delight,
When things desired
All come right.*

*They hesitate,
And wonder
Whether kind Fate
Can blunder.*

Go you to sleep,
As is meet—
You'll wake to keep
All that's sweet.

XXVII

SUNSHINE does flutter in between the blinds,
and for a moment, I am half on Earth
and half in Paradise.

The light ethereal adorns my room,
and in its crimson-tinted pink a world
perfected meets my eyes;

And, as I lie more conscious than awake,
(one's oft awake and yet not truly
conscious),

I know of Life's sweet worth.

But this dear morning's better than the rest.
It is the first to shine upon my dream
fulfilled, your loved-Love's birth.

Sweet Love conceived of Love ; fair Angel
shaped
by man's strong faith ; and sacredness
that sprang
from veneration ; lo !

These things I've caused to be, yet, verily,
I am of them : they are my strength,
and govern
my thoughts where'er I go.

XXVIII

THE gentle breezes play round every tree ;
The rivers ripple out to sea ;
The liquid music of the ocean,
With a vaster mightier motion,
Quenches the softer lyric of the stream ;
The advent of things desired absorbs the
dream ;
And Love, that cherished a small rose-bud,
Has spread to mountain, valley, desert,
and flood.

Scattered am I far over the universe,
And all that has nourished my spirit, I
nurse ;
The light that has led me, I reflect to the
skies ;
The warmth that has clothed me, endears
all to my eyes ;
As the woods have sheltered me, so I
would shelter other men ;
Birds that have sung to me, are echoed by
my pen,
Since Love, that cherished a small rose-bud,
Has spread to mountain, valley, desert, and
flood.

XXIX

O HOUSE me in thy heart,
Fairest of earthly mornings ;
That the silence of the Sky may quiet me ;
That the music of the streams may soothe
me ;
As, with my feet on higher ground,
I find a broader outlook o'er the fields.

O house me in thy heart,
Fairest of earthly mornings ;
That the tender flowers may teach me
gentleness,
And the meaning of both light and shade ;
So shall I learn how small a thing am I,
Yet feel how great might be my fund of
grace.

XXX

So I did sing on that fair morn,
Ere it had scarce begun ;
I thought no rose possessed a thorn,
No cloud could hide the Sun.

Thus gazing from my balcony,
To'rds which the flowers did climb,
I thought my own felicity
Would last as long as time.

I dreamed I'd probed the depths of Love,
And thought I understood
Myself, the World, and stars above,
So far as mortal could.

All one can see, I thought I'd seen :
My first experience
Made all to be, as something been ;
My knowledge made me dense.

And yet, though many years have gone
I still maintain those hours
Made me. I never would have won
But for those dreams and flowers.

I saw into the heart of things,
Though ignorantly, and
Had ne'er my fancy taken wings
I would not understand.

The youthful dreams of Paradise
That could be found on Earth,
Ever remained before my eyes,
Tokens of hidden worth.

So you precise and hoary men,
Curb not the young heart's dream ;
Perchance such visions will reveal
Truths you can never feel.

XXXI

LIGHT of my soul, so long as you are near
I cannot dwell in darkness, or forget
How holy is Life's pilgrimage, how clear
And musical is Duty's call, yet . . . yet,
Though you uphold me now, I still must
fear

That I might fall did you your choice regret.

How much is altered by a simple "yet,"
That parts us now from pleasure, now from
fear ;

That leaves us now delight, and now regret.
But, as the far horizon blue is clear,
Fain would I yesterday's fierce storm forget,
Light of my soul, so long as you are near.

Tell me again that I need never fear
Your strength may fail, your love may
know regret,

Light of my soul, so long as you are near ;
That in each other we shall still forget
What is not good for memory, and clear
Our hearts, and alway say, " We're happy
"yet !"

There should not be a reason for regret,
So long as we can keep our conscience clear ;
There should not be a thing I would forget,
Light of my soul, so long as you are near.
Say : " Look, the wildest tempest threatens,
" yet
"(Since we're together) we can have no fear."

If it be in man's power to keep you clear
Of misery, it shall be done, and yet
How can I always tell that things we fear
Did they arrive, are things we would regret ?
Light of my soul, so long as you are near,
One thing is sure, your need I'll not forget.

And as the days go by, I shall forget,
Light of my soul, so long as you are near,
To theorize on Love or Life ; and yet,
As my forgetfulness shall banish fear,
I'll prove a true philosopher.

... Regret,
Why did I mention you when skies were
clear ?

I am so foolish . . . Joy is weeping, yet
I know not if she cry through hope or fear,
... Poor fool, why did I mention you,
Regret ?

XXXII

FALSE love,

Sweet utterances make you cry ;
You shiver at each fond embrace,
And, with sobbed-out words, you answer
 why,
As a crimson blush spreads o'er your face.

False love,

You vow you meant to tell the truth before,
That all you've done for me was born of
 gratitude—

A debt—a sense of obligation—aye, and
 more,

A cruel responsibility, without intention
 to delude.

False love,

You say you thought I'd understand.
O you are sorry—but, what have you done ?
When I was fever-bound, you merely held
 my hand,
Put straight my pillow, kept me from the
 Sun.

False love,

Cruel fate has coupled gratitude with Love,
And you have measured friendship with a
 rule :

Instincts perverted by a morbid mind e'er
 prove

That Nature is degraded when in school.

XXXIII

DREAMS of the day, dreams of the night,
Dreams of despair, dreams of delight,
Arrive, vanish, and re-appear—
Now in a smile, now in a tear.

What youth learns now, it shall unlearn ;
Both wise and foolish thoughts return
To the brain—now held, and now rejected ;
Till, much perplexed and harassed, youth
is dead.

To-day's pleasure may be to-morrow's
pain,
Loss of the moment may be future gain.
The true become the false ; the false, the
true.
Clear skies darken ; dark skies may soon be
blue.

Youth that is dull may be brilliant yet ;
Brilliancy before its time may set :
Verily, the wise may say, Life is strange,
As, full of surprise, comes change upon change.

XXXIV

THERE comes a time when we
Can live on dreams no more !
When Fancy's reign is o'er,
There comes a time when we
Are sick at heart, and sore
With promises of yore.
There comes a time when we
Can live on dreams no more !

XXXV

Yes ; as I breathe the cold, clean air,
Fancies of the night and of my youth must
disappear,
Yet, like a man, I battle with despair.
Since once I nobly dreamed of good,
Though worldly vice and virtue I hardly
understood,
Shall I not conquer evil as I should ?
The dreams of youth equip the man.
In my younger days, the deeds of older
days began,
Since every youthful fancy breeds a plan.
But adverse actions had no place
In those early visions finely spun round
thoughts of grace
With which youth credits *all* the human race.
And so when one has older grown,
Unexpected conflicts come, and youth is
left alone
To conquer evil or be overthrown.
But still the discipline of thought,
Even in the darkest hour the weary World
has wrought,
Brings to a noble mind the best support.

XXXVI

I TURN the soil,
Since labour
Clarifies me
When distressed.

The breezes blow.
In the wind
Are voices soft
And gentle.

A strange content
The labour
And the soft breeze
Often bring.

*Silent, yet full
Of loud thoughts,
Are lazy hours
And moments;*

*Whilst in the stress
And the noise
Of a day's work
Reigns silence.*

XXXVII

I **LOVED** you for the good in you—your best !
These rueful hours have brought to light the
worst

In you ; and yet your better-being, as at
first,

Is ever glorious ! and though I cannot trust
You longer, Spirit of my Spirit, I durst
Not love you less, since are you not my only
Sun ? Heaven lies pursed

In your lips notwithstanding that they've
nursed

Frail falsehoods. I am accursed

With my own felicity. I loved a flower
that burst

Into a bloom, revealing the worm within.
I am immersed

In a pleasant odour none the less. My
spirit is all athirst,

For have I not tasted your goodness, your
best ?

BOOK
THREE

*By the same rule of contrariety the dust of
sandal-wood, which thou hast sprinkled,
may become poison ;*

*The moon, with cool beams, a scorching sun ;
the fresh dew, a consuming flame ; and
the sports of love be changed into agony.*

—THE GITAGOVINDA, OR
THE SONGS OF JAYADEVA

XXXVIII

I sit in my room alone,
And dream of our faded days ;
But clearer than any is one
When we met near the old, old trysting spot
And had not a word to say . . .
Ah, love, we never seemed farther apart
than then
When we met in the old trysting spot
And had not a word to say.

XXXIX

BUT tell me, weary Spirit, lone,
Weaving thy memories,
What is the solace to be known
To a digger of miseries ?

*Fair is the mind that
would recall*

*A moment full of ecstasy
Although it had to delve
in pain.*

But dost thou onward go
When thou wouldst pause to name
A pleasure drowned in woe,
A comfort lost beyond reclaim ?

*Grateful throughout
adversity*

*For all the sweets of
yesterday,*

*Should be the humble
mind of man.*

Spirit, cease thy words of grace !
Their measure sets too hard a pace,
Since pain is pain to me
Although it hold fresh Beauty
For the strong heart that wills
To mount the highest hills ;
But I all weary grow,
And gladly would forego
Even the lowest crest,
To gain a moment's rest.

XL

GOD ?—speak not of Him,
You shallow profaners ;
Bidding the weary be calm
Till all the calm be weary !

You that may squander
The day as you choose ;
You that can dwell in some
Beauteous world,
With your path in a field,
And the broad Sky above you
Unfouled by the smoke of the town,
Where blossoms are strewn
By the wanton wind,
And their perfume is borne
On the air that you breathe,
You—it is easy for you
To believe in God.

But, though I live in a dream
Of the same lovely scene,
There is the noise of the crowd,
The hurry of distant feet,
To awaken my mind to distress,
To bring me in touch
With a sad multitude
Of the alien Spirits that are
Capriciously gathered
Together by Fate ;
And—I find no comfort in God.

Monastic Moralists pray
In the secluded cloister cell,
And indolent worshippers love
In the meadows profusely flowered ;
But *what can God be to him*
Who lives in a filthy town
And is more a machine than a man ?

XLI

AYE ; you may laugh, call me a fool,
But answer me this,
Does God or Mammon rule ?
—He that bestows all bliss,
You say, may take it back.
What ?—since you've sipped from His cup
Of honey, He may tie you up,
And torture you on the rack ? . . .
If you left God alone,
He might speak to me ; but while He's shewn
To me in your light,
I cannot know Him. Right
Shall conquer, but in its own
Way ; likewise shall truth be known,
And, if God be, He shall be seen
To prove Himself—not what you mean.

XLII

BUT I would, for a moment brief,
Forget my spirit weary is ;
As wiser men weigh not their grief
With the measure of early bliss.

None but the fool will ever make
Long analysis of his state,
And be distressed each time he wake
A mere minute or two too late.

But he who through the mire can plod
And ne'er bewail his weary lot,
Shall find the vineyard of his God
Where all the fruits of Mammon rot.

XLIII

*Ah ; man is like a reed
That alters with the wind !
Sweet his response indeed
If softly blow the breeze ;
But if the mid-day find
A howling hurricane,
He'll sing to shriller keys—
So sensitive is man.*

Then softly bear thy breath,
Proud Zephyrus, or Death
Will march triumphant o'er the crest
Of yonder hillock to the West,
And the reed that replied
To ghostly winds that sighed
Gently through it, will float
From this shore's solitude,
To some far distant land
Beyond thy roughest mood,
Where even its small note
Someone shall understand.

XLIV

AH ; but is it always on the morrow
That we're promised balm for sorrow ?

Can the vision of a paradise to be,
Render comfort in our misery ?

I hear wise men briefly answer, saying :

“ There is rest

“ In the Quest.”

I hear common men retort “ Well, you wise

“ men, stand the test—

“ Be most desolate and most blest ! ”

Then a drunken scoffer says, holding high
his cup :

“ I am glad where'er I sup.”

Whilst a little child, playing with the
Summer flowers,

Knows not that some hate her sweetly-
scented hours.

Thus the innocent, the glutton and the
hungry find

Different pleasures to fill the mind.

And I gather that the truth is this,

Where man seeks it, there is bliss.

Should men call this pagan, well, forsooth,
Pagan too may be the Truth.

XLV

WHEN I feel the worst of sin to be
Its power to make Earth's beauty
(And the loveliness of things) absurd,
Because I am so quickly stirred
You say my spirit is unfit
To battle with man's rougher wit ;
And then you add, I have been paid
With ill so oft for Love,
That I am cynic made. . . .

I feel the Sky above
Never again can be
Quite as beautiful to me,
Although I still adore its blue,
Now that I've grown to know
How meagrely mean and untrue
Are the women and men below.

You say, I may have met the worst.
I know, I could not rest
Upon the fairest world's breast
Should one chance child of evil there be
nursed.
Therefore, I hate all sins that mar
The splendour of our little star.

XLVI

A **LOVER**, scorched by broken vows,
Sits in a dull crowd in an ugly hall,
While some young Don holds forth for two
long hours
On "Natural Selection and the Fall."

XLVII

AND, fickle maid, thy just punishment
Shall be a vivid picture, cruel,
Of the twisted life that is mine,
To haunt thee, to taunt thee, all day.

Deep in the maze of tangled wood,
Far down the depths of lone despair,
There shone a treacherous light,
A cursèd flare misguiding me.

The thicket dense concealed the Sky,
And Heaven was forgotten there,
Only the ominous shadows
Loomed across the treacherous light.

Thou, snug in thy soft serenity,
Wast the light that led to the depths
Hid in the maze of tangled wood,
Far down the paths of lone despair.

But, lo ! even the treacherous light
Has vanished, and loud echoes mock
Me, vibrating with the promise that
Thou *didst* give of an El Dorado.

Now my heart has grown vindictive ; ah !
Crueller than thine, hollow and old—
I'm hardened beyond recognition,
And mirthlessly laugh at my pain.

Then let my indifference to thee
Twist those lover-fondled lips of thine
With agony . . . Woman, I'm vile—
Yet thou art lovely even now.

BOOK
FOUR

He that lacks time to mourn, lacks time to mend.

'Tis an ill cure
For life's worst ills, to have no time to feel them.
Where sorrow's held intrusive and turned out,
There wisdom will not enter, nor true power,
Nor aught that dignifies humanity.

—SIR HENRY TAYLOR.

XLVIII

COME ; laugh with me,
Felicity,
At those you fool !
My heart is cool,
My brain is clear,
I need not fear
To play with you
That are not true.

Come ; laugh with me,
False Misery,
At those you pain !
Now I am sane,
No deadly dart
Pierces my heart—
I play with you
That are not true.

Come ; muse with me,
Wise Memory !
Recall the years
Of hopes and fears,
That lie to youth,
Hiding the truth ;
That contradict
All they inflict.

XLIX

AND I am glad, glad that my dreams have
fled ;
That I can laugh at early pain, can scorn
The lover's sigh ; and know my mind seemed
torn
In 'twain, yet played with every tear I shed.

I cherished every scar : the power that led
Me to distress, I loved : my ills were borne
Upon romantic bliss ; and I did mourn
With pleasure, lightly praying to be dead.

Go ! hide thyself, Delusion. I am free
From thy cruel bondage. Sentimental tears
Have bound me long enough. I now am
sane.

The busy man finds that felicity
And sorrow are but idle things ; he hears
No call of joy, and has no time for pain.

L

I MET her yesterday, my old, old love,
 And saw she had not altered ;
 Experience had taught her nothing, time had
 halted,
 Loitering round her mind . . . my old, old
 love,
 You may remain the same, but I cannot ;
 Thus, though the folly passed was not forgot,
 I gazed unflinchingly, without a qualm,
 Into your eyes, cold orbs of stubborn calm.

I met her yesterday, my old, old love,
 (The thought runs riot through my mind),
 And, though I suffered nothing, memories
 must bind
 The Past together, till my old, old love
 And I seemed in the woods again :
 She, a queenly maid ; I, a knightly swain ;
 And, for a moment, I had thought to kiss . . .
 Ah, me ; long since I had foregone that
 bliss.

LI

As the twilight deepened into night,
And the shrill shriek of an owl disturbed the
 reigning silence,
I traversed the "Lovers' Path" across
 the plain,
With conflicting thoughts to storm my mind,
As the Moon serenely shone upon the distant
 clouds,
And trees softly murmured in the restless
 wind,
While the evening's eerie, vivid light
Let my thoughts play at pretence,
And I dreamed that you hid in the lane,
Not a dozen yards away.

Then I called you softly, dear,
Just as though I loved you still and you
 were at my side.
Every now and then the owl would shriek,
And the trees more restless grew,
While the clouds transparent madly raced
 across the Moon.
... Swifter, swifter walked I as I dreamed
 of you,
Till I could have sworn that you stepped
 near,
Keeping pace with every stride...
Even once I thought I heard you speak,
Eerie phantom of the balmy night.

LII

IF yonder star could tell my fate,
 It would reveal how I shall fail ;
 And yet I do not hesitate,
 Nor ever hopeless feel, nor quail
 In thinking of my coming doom ;
 But every moment that I falter,
 Or miss the light within the gloom,
I marvel not that I'm a sinner
But that I sin not more. I feel
 Restrained and fettered by some sin
 Of by-gones ages that could steal
 The grace from unborn generations ;
 Of, if I lived in other days,
 Then many evil inclinations
 Must have been mine ; since wicked ways,
 Strange to my spirit, oft succeed
 In finding shelter in my mind—
 Something unknown will supersede
 The best in me, corruption bind
 Me fast, although I long to be
 A source of good, a man to give
 Each troubled friend felicity ;
 And though some noble task I strive
 To do each day, an all-strong power,
 A sense of certain failure, stirs
 Within to nip the bud ere flower
 Can bloom. I know not what occurs . . .
 All Life's a contradiction, and
 No man his life can understand.

LIII

ARE you surprised that I still hope,
Though certain failure I foresee?—
That I serenely grope
Through darkness; and that I can be content,
Though conscious of my weakened stride? . . .
The glories of the glowing firmament,
In vastness that's incomprehensible, hide
And yet reveal a greater magnitude
Than the supremacy of man.
The human race loves to exclude
All but itself from the Creator's plan ;
And yet I feel the inner loveliness,
The dignity of Earth's magnificence,
Have each an equal right to share the things
that bless
Posterity,—as though in Nature lurks a
sense,
Dumb and inanimate,
That could appreciate
The coming excellence.

Then in the light of this,
What are my pains, my bliss,
My goodness, and my fault ?—
What matter if I move or halt ?—
'Tis but a moment here,
And the Eternal After there.
But ? . . . no !—mistake me not ;
Deem not that I would have you think
There is no lot
That matters, and that men may rise or sink
Without a pain or loss.
Not that, but this, I do believe, the cross
We bear to-day,
The glory and the anguish of the fray,
Are naught, that they are lost
When our true Selves come forth.
The pastures passed, the rivers crossed,
The gentleness and wrath
Of Life, fade, since they are finite,
When the Eternal Day conquers the Present
Night.

LIV

WHEN night has woven pleasure round my
 pain,
Untamed and happy fancies quench each
 thought
That, in some less romantic hour, makes plain
My sorrow. Joyful remembrances court
The sweet solicitude Beauty has wrought
In my lulled mind, poetically pleased.
So haply lost in worlds that few have sought
And fewer reached, my earthly heart is
 eased,
And every wild, disturbing memory appeased.

Then, when the last fair dream is done, the
 night
Still claims my mind but makes me solemn.
Lo !

Across the plain kissed by the pale Moonlight,
Slowly serious Spirits come and go.
I am uplifted though I think of woe ;
It seems of little count because contempt,—
A healthy scorn of human stress,—I know,
When I return from worlds that I have
 dreamt
To be, as then all earthly things appear
 unkempt.

But when the solemn thoughts have gone,
the day,
With all its anguish, claims my mind. I lose,
In after moments, calm I brought away
From solitary hours of night. I muse
No longer on a dream, but must peruse
Myself, and dreary reading it will make ;
Since in the day 'tis mine to give and choose,
To take and to reject, to mend and break—
I am the captain of myself when I'm awake.

LV

EACH night
I dreamed of delight
That would vanish away
At day.

Yet now
The rosiest hour—
The noon—brings forth the good
It should.

The Sky
Is blue—no cloud nigh ;
And all that came in sleep
I keep.

LVI

I'M at—a re-awakening. Lo !
I dreamed I had destroyed all thought,
Passion, and Love, and hate, and woe ;
But I had not, and never shall.
Silent are strings that are not taut ;
And dead is every Soul that sleeps,
All lulled into stupidity.
But I awake, since strong thoughts call
To mind discarded memory,
And bring forth notes at which one weeps
Or softly laughs.

*The heart
Needs playing on, lest
it should fall
For ever out of tune.*

The art
To be alive is often taught
In one brief day. Never to live,
But only breathe, with naught to give,
With naught to keep, stagnates the Soul ;
Since for the aimless man there is no goal.

LVII

THEN let me live and dream,
 Though living bring me woe
 And dreaming cause a stream
 Of wilful tears to flow ;
 Since memories bestow
 No pain without a charm.
 Were no wild winds to blow
 I should not love the calm.

I could not watch a beam
 Of light were all aglow !
 Let every noisy theme
 Now end itself and go,
 Leaving but an echo
 To warn but not alarm.
 Were no wild winds to blow
 I should not love the calm.

When fails a cherished scheme,
 What solace may I know ?
 Fancy can make me deem
 It has not failed ; but, lo !
 Delusions fade . . . I'm slow
 Learning the struggle's balm :
 Were no wild winds to blow
 I should not love the calm.

Natal Star, tempests do
 The steadfast Soul no harm ;
 Were no wild winds to blow
 I should not love the calm.

LVIII

INNUMERABLE the storms
Brave men have faced serenely,
Whilst I ungainly stumbled
Along the rocky path of Life.

Until the tempest blew more fiercely,
And the ground beneath my feet did shake,
And the thunder roared within my ears ;
Then, if I had remained still weak,
I should have tumbled down to rise no more ;
But *the very conflict gave me strength*,
And though I trembled, I bravely faced the
storm.

Again I turned my eyes away, and made
pretence :
I thought forgotten trouble could not be,
Until, just when I felt secure
And all the gates of memory seemed closed,
The tempest broke revealing all the Past . . .
Emotions overwhelmed me, and I staggered
back,
Until I understood and steadfast held my
own.

LIX

THEREFORE, poems to sing your praise,
Some mad with anguish you made mine,
I send to you. Then if you gaze
Upon a single tear-decked line
Responsive to something in you,
Will you reply? . . .

'Twould be unread,
Your message. Though my love's still true,
Unmellowed friendliness lies dead
Between us, and to-day 'tis far too late
To re-adjust ourselves.

You may,
I trust you will, in time abate
Your scorn, recall that, once, a day
With me gave pleasure, and that I
A little praise, in spite of all,
Have earned. Then let my last Good-bye,
Unspoken though it be, enthrall.

LX

THE woodland now
Vibrates
With song that's blest.

On twisted bough
Glad mates
Construct a nest.

Whilst early flowers
Just peep
To greet such Love.

But my desires
Now sleep,
And do not move.

Each year a Spring
For birds,
Autumn for me.

No more I sing
Fond words :
I let them be.

Love brought a joy
That woe
Could not banish.

I'm old, the boy
May go
Ere dreams vanish.

But I must stay ;
Yet glad
Love gave me themes.

Wending my way,
I had
Romantic dreams.

Now Love may call ;
But I
Heed not. I've lost.

Yet, after all,
I sigh
Not at the cost.

Love's made me strong,
Dear girl,
And you care not.

Hear that bird's song !
You're well,
And I'm—forgot.

BOOK
FIVE

*Stand up! behold
The Earth, Life, Death, and Day and Night.
Think not the things that have been said of
these,
But watch them and be excellent, for men
Are what they contemplate.*

—JOHN DAVIDSON.

LXI

THINGS that I prize slip by,
Tossed on the wind-shaked sea
Of Life.

The waves are towering high,
And winds would share with me
Their strife.

I seek a harbour, yet
Am borne into the deep
Water.

I'm tired. May I forget
The storm, as things in sleep
Alter?

Or must I ever go,
Wandering I know not where
Or why,

Until the day I grow
Hard-hearted in despair,
Or die?

LXII

ALL the glad day, the young sheep run
In the pastures beneath the Sun.
Contented creatures, they. Though fright
And pain have made them tremble, bright
Emotions they retain. Once done
With, pain is o'er. Poor mortal one,
Because of sorrow passed, why shun
This morn? . . . memory turns to night
All the glad day.

If brains a living skeleton
Of sorrow make, 'twere best that none
Were mine. Sometimes, great minds delight
In little things that put to flight
Dull thoughts . . . cannot sweet themes be
 spun
All the glad day?

LXIII

AH ; let me to the field,
And hear the song-thrush sing.
Though he has lost his mate,
The rapture that remains
Shall still inspire his song.

LXIV

WHERE rural splendour is ; where run
The clear receptive brooks to streams
That sparkle in the sportive Sun ;
Where Beauty, in her wistful dreams,
Weaves spells of Paradise o'er Earth ;
Where Life is ever one joyance
Of happy labour, sober mirth,
I'll stay, forgotten there, perchance,
By every sombre memory.

*There's health in the field ;
There's peace in the toil ;
There's pride in the yield
Of the soil.*

Where bramble-bushes shield the corn,
Where the reed-warbler trills his lay ;
Where I can view the growing morn ;
And keep a watch at close of day,
When the starred Sky reveals its wealth ;
Where, drowsy, I can muse in gloom
That falls, in solitary stealth,
O'er fruitful mead and woodland bloom,
I lose my sombre memory.

*There's strength from the field ;
There's rest from the toil ;
There's gain from the yield
Of the soil.*

LXV

THE pleasant story of the flowers,
The smaller pleasures of the day,
The mellow undistinguished hours,
Shall glorify the meanest way.

Can man be dull while hums a shell
Mysteriously, and planets spin
Suspended in the Sky?—or dwell
Unmoved upon Life's origin?

In the World's resplendent secrets,
Wise men will seek their rest and find
Distraction from the old regrets
That occupy the dormant mind.

Everywhere Beauty reigns for those
Who seek delight in loveliness ;
And every turning shall disclose
Riddles for lively minds to guess.

LXVI

WHILE the wind refreshes me
From the height
That overlooks the tarn,
No more ghostly reveries
Dance in wan
Fantastic thoughts
That mimic a thousand plagues ;
Or, shapeless in a shroud,
Haunt the silent solitudes
Of haze-apparelled dales.

No more a phantom of despair
Can languish in my heart,
A quivering captive,
Woefuller than sorrow is,
Brooding o'er the day
That should be thronged with lovelier extasies.

The merry brook,
Tinkling like a dulcimer,
Runs through the dewy sward,
Scattering the pebbles in its play ;
Trees sway in rhythmic harmony,
As the wind,
With its arrogant might,
Tosses the stately boughs ;
And, swinging in the swaying branches,
A twittering linnet sings.

Beyond the river-rushes green,
Lazily bending with the breeze,
Yellow rag-weed studs the lea ;
While, waving its golden splendour,
The corn is ripening in the Sun.

And, as poppies nod their scarlet heads,
My voice rolls out in song.

LXVII

ERE my birth enslaved my Soul,
It was cradled here,
Where the primrose and the violet
Gather in a green recess.

Here, from whence my Spirit sped,
I tarry to enjoy the day ;
And, beyond the nestling valley,
Golden gorses mingle
Softly in the purple of the hills.

LXVIII

WHAT better temple than a field or wood ?
Where is Divinity more marked, or good
Revealed so well, as where the cowslips
are ? . . .

Beneath the Sun to praise, beneath a star
To vow and to confess.

This oval field all full of life and breath,
Is better than a church that speaks of Death
In solemn song. Here, where there is Liberty,
Where man may open out his heart, and be
Beyond the craft of priests, I praise and
hear the songs

Of happy birds that move me from the
wrongs

Of sordid pain, instead of words that make
Me think of my unhappy mind, and break
My spirit. Foolish 'tis to dwell on sin :
I deem it best to dream of good, and win
A solace that shall lift my soul, and stir
My noblest thoughts.

LXIX

BUT do I rejoice too soon ?
Clouds may darken Summer's noon ;
Sorrow may be prying round,
Stalking men whose joys abound.

I should be prepared to meet
Desolation, bitter-sweet ;
Fugitives from sorrowings
Rue the fear their fleeing brings.

Dauntless, I would challenge woe ;
Through Life's brambly woodland go.
Morose spectres, thus defied,
Hasten quickly from my side.

LXX

Nor as the vesper prayers were sung ;
Or minstrels played, Good-night ;
Or solemn curfew chimes were rung ;
Or yonder purple height
Was fondled by the dying day,
Did my love's Spirit pass away.

Not then, but with the first warm glare,
The extasy of Dawn,
Thrilled by the glossy blackbird's air,
Was her bright Spirit borne
O'er shining grass, where sunbeams play,
Beyond to the eternal day.

There was no fear—she did not seem
To pass into a sleep,
Nor lose herself in tranquil dream,
Nor yet appear to creep
Away as though she were a thief
Whose night is long, whose day was brief.

A smile still lingered on her face ;
She blossomed into Life . . .
It seemed she had begun her race ;
As though her thoughts were rife,
But listless to the void behind,
The limitations of the mortal mind.

BOOK
SIX

*This then, the End of all we would attain,
This, the completion of an ample dream;—
A little breath that feeds a mighty strain,
A mighty heart that thrills a little gain.*

—SIR JAMES DENHAM.

NOTE TO BOOK SIX

Some time is supposed to lapse between this and the previous book, during which period the narrator loses his eyesight, and the following poems describe the new emotions which, then, arose within him, and finally led him to a fuller understanding of Life.

H. G.

LXXI

I'm sad, though balmy breezes blow,
And caress my cheek
With a pleasant glow,
Whilst a playful rhythm
I have lately learned to know
Dances through my wind-tossed hair.

I'm sad, though there's a melody
In the whistling grass
Once unknown to me,
And a multitude of tunes
I have lately known to be
Now arrest my senses.

Like a dis-embodied being
Do I feel, as though I were
Unattached to anything,
Had no corresponding place ;
Yet I closer cling
To the Spirit of Existence.

Contact and sound,
Music and caress,
And all that's around,
Now seem part of me ;
As if the World were found
Only in my thought.

And I, did I not possess
A knowledge of sight,
Might be happy, I confess ;
But I tire of this dream-world,
Knowing only the terrible greyness
Before my sightless eyes.

LXXII

THE common glories of the day
Are like a half-forgotten dream,
A memory of the long-away.

I still possess the babbling stream ;
But now that I am grown so old,
How empty does its music seem !

The breezes that I loved are cold ;
All languidly they breathe on me . . .
The blackbird's song is grown less bold ;

While wretchedly damp is the lea ;
Heavy the scent of rotting bloom,
And Day is ruled by Misery.

LXXIII

Now that I'm blind there is for me
No grace in a tree ;
My hands compel my mind to mark
The roughness of the bark.
I used to deem
There was a loveliness about a stream ;
But now the chilly waters meet
Unpleasantly around my feet . . .
O River, where was thy beauty ?—
Or thine, O Tree ?

I recall the water : it was dull—
How could I deem it beautiful ?—
What pleasure could be found
In its senseless babble, as it wound
Its course along the field ?—
Why did I love to yield
My spirit to the liquid note ?—
On what therein was there to dote ?

The thunder rumbles.
Lo ! Heaven as well as Earth grumbles !
Cold winds blow.
Ah ; woe to me—woe ;
Since there is but one conclusion,
Happiness is our first and last illusion.

LXXIV

AH; taunt me not, O Spirit mine,
With questions thus in vain.

Ah; cease to grumble or to whine,
Adding discontent to pain.

I do not wish to feel a void
Where once I thought was grace.

Where loveliness was once enjoyed,
Shall I but find the base?

No!—Spirit, seek thy love of old;
Shelter thy thoughts in her.

Then memory shall be a fold
For thee, tired wanderer.

LXXV

THE roses scent the air
Where she who was so fair
Lies resting in her grave,
And lilies from the wood
Perfume her solitude.

Near by, the waters flow :
The whispering breezes blow
Around the soft-green turf ;
While, rapt in extasy,
A bird sings on the lea.

My love can still enthrall
Me, though beyond recall :
Her bright habitation
In the celestial sphere
Seems close beside me here.

Wheresoe'er bird may sing,
Or flowers together cling,
Or winds blow playfully,
There is her Spirit found—
In every pulse and sound.

She does not seem to be
A phantom-memory,
But a companion Soul :
Speaking, holding my hand ;
One who can understand.

I meet her here and there—
Far, near and everywhere—
Her Spirit is more real
Than yon soft-clinging flowers
Freshening these Autumn hours.

And I find new delight
In the prophetic night,
In each day's revelation ;
Dwelling in her all wise
From Sunrise to Sunrise.

And nothing that is small
Or large, in part, in all,
Now seems a careless void—
All purposeless and odd—
An oversight of God.

Dimly her power outlines,
In all creation, signs
Of deep significance—
Something to which the mind
Of man is ever blind.

Throwing myself on her,
Dwelling in each murmur
And form of Earth and Sky,
I find true joy and rest
At home within my breast.

My pleasure of a night
Depends upon the light
That shines within myself—
I deem no tune lovely
That is not played in me.

And my dead love shall live
For me, the while I give
Her welcome in my breast :
The source of all I find
Is here within my mind.

LXXVI

My Spirit, thou wast foolish grown
When thou didst dream thy joy was sped,
When thou didst count thyself alone,
And all but thy sad prison dead.

My Spirit, thou wast lulled to sleep
By my poor weary mind that grieved,
Lost in its desolation deep,
Wherein of life it seemed bereaved.

Now, Spirit mine, rejoice again,
Since within thee alone can shine
Thy sun, thy light, thy balm for pain,
And thy inheritance divine.

No more regret Life's poverty,
Since thou hast wealth that none can steal :
An ample credit's banked in thee,
Therefore, thou shouldst not hopeless feel.

Then, every hour thou art distressed,
Go search thyself, and count thy store ;
And thou shalt find that thou art blessed,
Each time thou searchest, even more.

LXXVII

WERE I to sing no longer notes of praise,
Then should I know the emptiness of days
That I now beautify with joyous song ;
And yet I do my intellect no wrong,
Beholding in myself a source of light,
Since all around is darker than a night
Deep-clouded, till the radiance within
Drives far away the shadows of man's sin ;
And all the ghosts of pain that one has borne
Shall vanish when the Soul has found its
morn.

LXXVIII

My spirit aspiring seeks not its rest
As a leaf or a petal that's bloomed out its
day,
And is borne to the ground on the breast
Of the temperate breeze.

My heart has discovered the sweetest way
To mend all its sorrow in striving, and is
taught
There is joy to be found in the fray
On the plain of desire.

The hunt brings a joy that the quarry sought
Holds not for the hunter once the race is
out-run,
Once the quarry has lost and is caught,
And the sport's at an end.

Each disillusion is followed by one
New illusion that's ever as strange as the
old.
Though Life's tangle be never undone,
There's joy in the puzzle.

LXXIX

To have been called into
Existence is enough for me !
And were I to possess
Naught else but Life, still would
I be surpassing rich—
Although my eyes
Are robbed of use,
Day of
Light.
(Just think,
If you had missed
The song of birds,
The sunbeams round your path,
The ravishment of Life !)
Then, though my hour be dark,
And should there chance to be no dawn
To come, it shall suffice.

LXXX

I live on myself,
Drinking deeply of my thoughts ;
Dreamy I may be,
But there's truth in all man dreams,
And something false in much he sees.

Sweetest music now
Do I hear in me. The song
Of a minstrel glad,
Tuned to some heavenly lyre,
Surges through me. God plays in me.

LXXXI

DEEP in the soul of me
There is no misery :
Does not God sit there and breathe
Away the thoughts that make me grieve ?

I am my thoughts, and God
Prevents their being odd—
He carries my weary Soul
Onward to the celestial goal.

I speak of God since He
Is my Immortality ;
The figure-head of grace, Love ;
The promise of the World above.

I do not see, but feel
His presence where I kneel ;
Nor picture Him as a king,
But a power, when I sing.

God is the best in me ;
My true felicity ;
All the good within my reach—
The haven of the storm-drenched beach.

But can this power know of me
Or care for my lone misery ?
I know not. 'Tis enough to know
It shelters me where'er I go.

LXXXII

THE explorer's delight
At another land in sight,
The glamour of it all,
Shall be mine at the call
Of Death.

When I leave
The little World, I shall grieve
But for a moment, and miss
The Sun's warm kiss,
And the whispering trees ;
The low melodies
Of rivers flowing,
And the soft blowing
Of the breeze.
But I shall sigh
Contentedly, Good-bye,
Grateful for all that was worth
Loving on Earth.

Nor fear shall I know,
Nor hesitation, when I go
Into the World beyond.
As on Earth I was fond
Of pastures new, there I shall look
For some hidden nook
In the celestial sphere,
Hoping to find you there
Waiting to travel with me
Along the byways of Eternity.

LXXXIII

I **CANNOT** deem myself asleep in death ;
Nor when my lungs no longer hold my breath,
Shall I be still.

My very Spirit seems
To be in motion found ; my very dreams
Are full of active thought, the whole
Of which is struggling to'rds a goal
Beyond my reaching.

I would
Be rather cast all destitute
Upon the wind's rough, heaving breast,
A lonely wanderer, than find eternal rest.

Then think of me, when I have gone,
As an adventurer who struggles on ;
One who, since he has found a broader life,
Takes greater glory in the daily strife.

LXXXIV

THERE is a stillness in the air,
Not troubled with expectant pain,
But a balmy softness free from care ;
And the leaves on the trees scarce dare to
 move,
While the Moon illuminates the plain
That slopes to'rds the gently lapping stream . .
But where are you, my love ?—
Are you but a poet's dream ?

I stand upon the plain, as fall
The shadows to the ground, and my Spirit
 does gaze
Into the worlds beyond. I call
To you—my voice is borne upon the lazy
 breeze
Vibrating with the thoughts of other days,
When, standing at my side, you sang as the
 Sunlight shone
Reflected in your eyes . . . please
God, you are not for ever gone.

I find a painless mockery,
(Having travelled beyond despair),
A poor, wan ghost of yesterday, amusing me ;
Yet I laugh not, when the willowy trees
Tremble with extasy as though they thought
 you would appear ;
When I hear your voice, that is no voice at all,
Borne softly on the gentle breeze,
Answering my call.

Then, as I rest in these tranquil hours,
I learn that I have lived my day,
And must forsake the friendly bowers
Of Earth. I feel your Spirit take
My weariness away . . .
If I die with the night at Sunrise,
In the World to come, shall I awake
To read my welcome in your eyes ?

THE END

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OTHER
WORKS
BY
HIBBART
GILSON

UNINSPIRED VERSE

First published in 1917. 1/6 nett.

SOME COMMENTS

"The verses of a young poet, still in his teens, this little book evidences a striking personality—an intellect of very great promise. Fantastic, eerie, vividly hideous, with here and there a softer touch, the poems are no less remarkable for their variety of thought than for their metrical surprise. A certain ruggedness gives to them distinctive strength, revealing a mind of great originality and independent conception. The volume, artistically produced, is bound to give pleasure to all lovers of poetry. Whilst those who find interest in the evolution of a poet's mind will find abundant material in the comparison of these first poems with Mr. Gilson's future productions."—BOOKS OF THE DAY.

"A literary curiosity...an art that is never displeasing."—THE SCOTSMAN.

"We should give the palm to the little piece called 'The Convent Marriage Bell,' which gives a real and unconventional picture tenderly and concisely."—THE TIMES.

"Independent in thought and style."—THE BOOKMAN.

"The collection as a whole proves the possession by the young author of fertility in metrical resource, a sense of originality of style, and an instinct for novelty in the expression of his views. The ingenuity of treatment in 'The Organ Recital,' 'The Madman's Song,' and other pieces and the seriousness of vision in 'Disillusioned,' 'The Last Caress,' and the like, are noteworthy. We shall look with interest for more work from Mr. Gilson's pen."—THE ATHENÆUM.

"We are assured that Hibbart Gilson, the author of 'Uninspired Verse,' wrote the book before he was 18."—THE YORKSHIRE POST.

"Striking poems. Always musical and often quaint and original."—THE PUBLISHER'S CIRCULAR.

"Remarkable, not merely as the verses of a youth, but also upon their merits, amongst which we may include force, imagination, originality, daring, spontaneity, and inspiration. The book makes a pleasing appeal to the eye, for it has a comely shape, artistic gold lettering, and it carries beautiful designs."—THE CITIZEN.

SUNSHINE

THE TUNING OF A SOUL AND A SEQUENCE OF JOYOUS VERSE

Third and Revised Edition, 1920. 2/6 nett.

SOME REVIEWS

“POET’S GRATITUDE.—As a thanksgiving on his recovery from total loss of sight, Hibbart Gilson is devoting the profits of his pleasing little book of poems, ‘Sunshine,’ to St. Dunstan’s Hostel for Blinded Soldiers and Sailors.”—THE SHEFFIELD INDEPENDENT.

“The object of the book, the author tells his readers, is to mark the distance he has travelled along the road that will lead him to a fuller and more perfect realization of Life and the Beautiful. His main theme—the vivifying and gladdening influence of true Love—is well developed. In all but one of the twenty short verse poems that compose the Sequence, a gem of thought is gracefully set.”—THE CITIZEN.

“Mr Hibbart Gilson, whose ‘Uninspired Verse’ attracted notice for its mark of originality, has written another volume. Besides ‘A Sequence of Joyous Verse,’ which shows metrical skill and unhackneyed expression, freshness of thought and tenderness of feeling, it contains a prose poem, ‘The Tuning of a Soul,’ of a pleasantly fantastical turn.”—THE SCOTSMAN.

"The author of this booklet of verse holds the belief that it is the poet's function to mould human speech into new forms of beauty. There is a mingled tenderness and pathos throughout these fresh compositions by Mr. Gilson, fostered, in a measure, by a keen and loving insight into nature, which will impress the reader."—THE PUBLISHERS' CIRCULAR.

"The poems included are not only notable for a gentle tenderness and a mingling of melancholy and hope, but also for the fact that they are the outpouring of a spirit of thankfulness at the recovery of lost vision. In 'The Tuning of a Soul,' the title of the prose poem which opens the volume, the writer eloquently describes the genesis of his worship of the cult of the beautiful."—THE BIRMINGHAM WEEKLY POST.

"Charm and power—all musical to the ear and pleasing to the heart and mind. Could be read with advantage from any ethical platform."—MONTHLY RECORD.

"There is a note of real sincerity in Mr. Gilson's verse ; he is not imitative, but writes always as one who feels he has something to say and is earnest to find not only himself but his own ways of expressing himself. In this little book he would seem to have rallied already from the artificial passions and morbid tendencies that afflict many young poets, and to have found strength in a healthful, serene philosophy of happiness :

'My joy proves courage mine ; 'tis brave to write,
When life is dull, as if one's heart were light.'

—That is the key-note of his lyrics ; not a flashy and easy optimism, but the thoughtful cheerfulness that comes of quiet communion with the eternal spirit that is in nature and in man. If the poems do not touch great heights they reach towards them, and there is far more promise in their natural simplicity than there could be in any ornate pretentiousness.”—THE BOOKMAN.

“ These poems are a sort of autobiographical statement of the author’s development in optimistic belief—they have an extraordinary effect of sincerity and simplicity, and seem to come straight out of spiritual experience, almost forming their own technique as they go along—he comes to see the all-sufficiency of Love and Beauty, and ‘To a Pessimist’ he affirms his ultimate faith in the essential goodness of creation. ‘This is proof that ugliness is rare, since you must point it out.’ He believes that it is better to state the good and to affirm the beautiful than to be always pointing out the bad and girding against it. His optimism is not, however, the facile optimism of idleness and careless vision. There are some sympathetic simply expressed love-poems and a rather beautiful prose-poem called ‘The Tuning of a Soul,’ dealing mostly with the psychology of a child. There is far more subject-matter than in most modern poetry, but though it is mostly philosophical in nature, the poetry is true poetry, and refreshingly lucid and quiet toned”—THE NEW WITNESS, under the heading *A Poet of Reflection*.

THE HIDDEN SPLENDOUR OF LOVE, NATURE AND BEAUTY

*First published in 1920 with illustrations and
designs by Edward Docker. 3/6 nett.*

PRESS NOTICES

" Feeling that rhyme is apt to tyrannise over thought and aiming to achieve at once the brevity of expression that is imposed by verse and the greater freedom that prose allows, Mr. Hibbart Gilson has evolved an irregularly metrical and rhymeless stanza of his own. That he put his thoughts into the form that he found best adapted to their utterance is an ample justification of his medium. They are the glowing thoughts of youth on love and beauty, truth and dreams, the secrets of nature, and the blind gropings of the human heart after knowledge of self and of the worlds seen and unseen. They have an individual note and a simple sincerity that are in themselves no small merit. He has the mystic's sense of man's oneness with the universal soul of things, and links up a love of earth with the loftiest spiritual impulses "—THE BOOKMAN.

"The writer, a young Irishman not long out of his teens, betrays that sense of the irksomeness of the restraints of rhyme and rhythm which has given rise to the 'free verse' which has of late become so prevalent. He is not one of those shallow souls moved merely by a desire for change and too indolent to take up the great poetical tradition. He believes that it is the poet's function to mould human speech into new forms of beauty, and he is not adverse to the most daring experiments. In his previous volumes, 'Un-inspired Verse' and 'Sunshine,' he gave evidence of a striking personality and a heart and intellect of unusual promise—and all who read his present experiment will wish long life to one so deeply thoughtful and sincere. Whether Coleridge would approve of the form of these poetic stanzas is doubtful, but it is certain that he would welcome and admire the fresh and deep ideas expressed in most of them, for at the back of them there is a spiritual philosophy akin to his own. Mr. Gilson has a firm belief in the fact that the world of sense is the garment of the spiritual world, the manifestation of spiritual realities. In these stanzas . . . the thought is fresh and true and fine, and lifts and links us to infinite."—By Rev. T. A. Seed in a review for **GREAT THOUGHTS**.

"Mr. Gilson's new poem, written in a peculiarly interesting stanza form of his own, expresses in choice and melodious language, the healthy, optimistic thoughts of the truly mystical poet whose innate veneration

of the Beautiful is refreshingly unaffected. There is scarcely a stanza without some ennobling thought inspired by faith in the splendour of real grace and goodness that is so often hidden from view. The mystic's mind is eloquently and convincingly portrayed with pleasing brevity and unusual conciseness ; and, in a delightfully impersonal way, the author recounts his own experiences and evidences the sound sensibility of true mysticism."—THE AUTHOR'S REVIEW.

" The theme of the poem is the eternal quest for The Hidden Splendour—the elusive, but ever alluring, Beauty folded in the heart of things. The author's creed is the Higher Pantheism of all true poets. He believes that the material and the spiritual are co-existent—the function of the one being to express the other—and his quest is given expression to with a considerable measure of poetic impulse and genius."—THE HERTFORDSHIRE EXPRESS.

" Rhymeless verse-making which makes far more demands upon the originality and subtlety of the poet than the uninitiated imagine. Mr. Gilson is a worshipper of the mystical trinity—Love, Beauty and Nature, and there is a noble idealism running through his thoughts which is intellectually as well as emotionally expressed."—THE INQUIRER.

"The main idea of the work . . . may perhaps be summed up as follows :—that Reality is transcendental, it is all about us, but it is only when we ourselves are pure and humble that we have access to it."—POETRY REVIEW.

"The book is divided into three parts, 'Love,' 'Nature,' and 'Beauty.' 'Love is essence of possession' but 'evil things are spiritless.' 'I love all things' therefore 'all things are mine.' Love, in fact, is the key to all life. 'Nature' is the tremendous visible sanity by which the spiritual is tested, and 'Beauty' alone can 'end the strife' between wisdom and desire. Such are a very few of the thoughts and ideas, many of them luminous and profound, with which these serious canticles are full"—THE NEW WITNESS, under the heading *A Poet of Reflection*.

"For a mystic to attempt to explain his theories of art and life in verse is a bold undertaking. Using a curious unrhymed stanza of his own, which on the whole he manipulates rather well, Mr. Gilson communes with himself . . . about metaphysics, æsthetics, and the facts of existence, always from optimistic standpoints. Mr. Gilson believes in the ultimate unity of everything : Mahomet, Mrs. Eddy, Man, Nature, and so on. The book is very well printed."—THE TIMES.

"The writer has adopted a very unusual stanza, which at first would seem hardly acceptable, but he proves his method to be one which provides an admirable

vehicle for the expression of thought. His matter is finely conceived and it has the merits of force and originality."—THE MANCHESTER EVENING NEWS.

"Scientists may endeavour to prolong the age of youth by means of butter-milk, thyroid gland, or what not, but Hibbart Gilson, a young poet of original fancy and exuberant daring, is, or ought to be, indifferent to all such panaceas. 'I believe' he says, 'were we all to record the pure thoughts of our youth, and to read them *continually*, no matter how inadequately written, we would be more righteous and far younger and agreeable in our old age' [of which thought the *New Witness* says, 'there is much truth in this. Imaginative joy does veritably keep the spirit eternally young.'] In his previous volume, entitled 'Uninspired Verse' . . . he displayed a pleasing fertility in metrical resource, and this is again in evidence, no less pleasing, in his latest work. The stanza he adopts is what we may term Gilsonian; certainly we cannot recollect anyone else experimenting with it. In addition to this originality, however, he reveals a quaint imagination and true poetic vision. It is his literary ambition that when he is older he may have 'a syllabic ghost of pure and beautiful thoughts,' and he is rapidly rendering that fanciful consummation possible."—THE ABERDEEN DAILY JOURNAL.

"Mr. Hibbart Gilson's thoughtful, if rather fantastically formed philosophical poem on Beauty and Truth . . . goes in quaintly, fully phrased stanzas of simple, earnest

meditation, that are always pleasing and never commonplace.—THE SCOTSMAN.

“A wider and more vitalising outlook than that usually associated with modern Poetry.”—MONTHLY RECORD.

“A distinct grace and accuracy of phrase.”—THE IRISH INDEPENDENT.

“Much individuality of thought.” — THE BIRMINGHAM WEEKLY POST.

“In the title of his first book ‘Uninspired Verse’ Mr. Hibbart Gilson was at least refreshingly modest. His new books ‘Sunshine’ and ‘The Hidden Splendour’ shew a happy increase in ability, and are specially interesting as being the work of a young man who has recovered from complete loss of sight.”—THE EVENING STANDARD.

N.B.—Numbers v and LXXIX of *In and Out of Heaven* are written in the “Gilsonian” stanza.



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